DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 397 015 SP 036 727

AUTHOR Stahlhut, Richard G.; Hawkes, Richard R.
TITLE Classroom Teacher Cadres: A Partnership between Agencies That Is Designed To Inspire and Model "Best Teaching/Learning Practices" for Student Teachers.
PUB DATE Feb 96
NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators (76th, St. Louis, MO, February 24-28, 1996).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Agency Cooperation; *Clinical Supervision (of Teachers); *College School Cooperation; Educational Cooperation; Educational Finance; Elementary Secondary Education; Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; Information Networks; Multicampus Colleges; *Partnerships in Education; *Preservice Teacher Education; Program Development; Regional Programs; State Programs; *Student Teaching; Teacher Education Programs
IDENTIFIERS *University of Northern Iowa

ABSTRACT

This paper describes how the University of Northern Iowa constructed formal networks that increased communications with public school practitioners and infused new ideas into the teacher training program. Faculty in the Office of Student Field Experience decided all regional campuses of the university should provide some common experiences for teacher trainees, including not only a common core curriculum, but similar structures for delivery as well. The core curriculum was built on five ingredients: teaching experiences; seminars; journals; conferences; and action research projects. Each regional partnership agreed to arrange pre-student teaching field experiences and a semester of student teaching, as well as hiring clinical supervisors from local schools, establishing regional advisory groups, and establishing a position for a resident professor. Communication among students, faculty, and clinical supervisors at the 12 statewide regional sites improved enormously with the implementation of an E-mail network (supported with telecommunications training for participants), the first of many major expenses that challenged the budget of the project. Suggestions for creative funding of such programs are discussed. Overall, the system of partnerships between local school systems and the state universities was found to produce a better-prepared cadre of teachers and benefit all parties concerned. (PB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

The University of Northern Iowa

Classroom Teacher Cadres: A Partnership Between Agencies That Is Designed to Inspire and Model "Best Teaching/Learning Practices" For Student Teachers

Presented by

Richard G. Stahlhut, Ph.D.
Ottumwa Regional Center Coordinator
University of Northern Iowa

Richard R. Hawkes, Ph.D.
Carroll/DMACC 2+2 Program Director
University of Northern Iowa

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. Stahlhut

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☐ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy

Association of Teacher Educators
76th Annual Meeting
St. Louis, Missouri
February 24-28, 1996

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Cedar Falls, Iowa 50614

S6036 727

Abstract

Requirements for public school classroom teachers have expanded and the science of effective teaching practice has increased. It is clear that old teacher training paradigms must be modified to better prepare teachers for the decades ahead. These changes imply universities must experiment and take some risks if they hope to successfully train tomorrow's teachers.

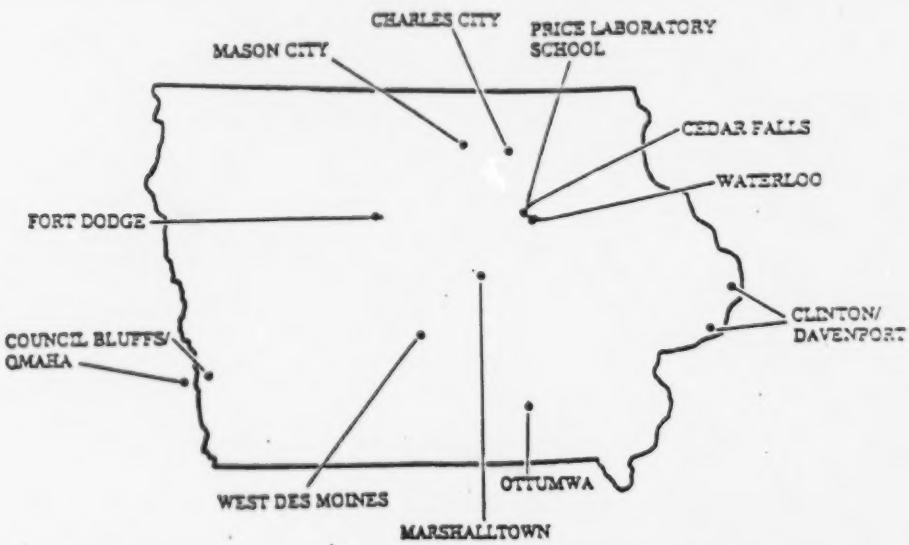
The objective of this paper is to describe how public school practicing professionals can be actively involved in a university teacher training program. We will share how the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) constructed formal networks that increased communications with practitioners and infused new ideas into the teacher training program.

Collaborations and partnerships mean the parties involved must be willing to share and cooperate. We have devoted much energy to finding common ground, in delegating responsibilities, and setting limits so all parties involved are satisfied and capable of performing their duties. It is our intent to describe for you how a partnership model can be established with K-12 practitioners. We will discuss how partnership programs were initially organized and how Clinical Supervisors have contributed to our success. We will also discuss how Associate Teacher Cadres were established and how the Cadres helped develop and expand partnership activities.

We encourage participants to dialogue with us throughout this presentation so greater clarity can be attained and so alternate ideas can be exchanged and expanded upon.

In the beginning:

The year was 1988. Tom Switzer, Dean of the COE at UNI, meet with the faculty of the Office of Student Field Experience (OSFE) to challenge them to design collaborative partnerships that would involve practitioners and improve teacher training at UNI. In Figure 1 you can see how the Regional Student Teaching Centers, lead by site-based professors, were configured before the partnership program started.



The OSFE faculty wanted all the regions to require some common experiences for UNI teacher trainees. The faculty wanted not only a core curriculum, but similar structures for its delivery. OSFE faculty decided the curriculum would contain five ingredients: 1. Teaching experiences, 2. seminars, 3. journals, 4. conferences, and 5. Action research projects.

To facilitate curriculum delivery and operations, each regional partnership agreed to arrange prestudent teaching field experiences and a semester of student teaching, hire, on a 50% contract basis, a Clinical Supervisor (a local educator connected to the main regional school system), establish Teacher Associate Cadres (a regional advisory group), and continue the idea of regional administration through a resident professor (full time UNI faculty member). The plan was set and ready to be presented to prospective partnership school districts.

Collaboration means sharing decision making (Goodlad, 1987). When practitioners and local school districts were approached about the formation of a collaborative partnership, they had suggestions about how their regional centers might be organization. We quickly discovered there were site-specific regional concerns that had to be built into the master plan. By the fall of 1989 most of the regional centers were organized. The plan stated above was in place, plus each of the newly organized regions had local issues built into their final collaborative partnership contract. Some examples of regional center differences were the following: 1. Some Clinical Supervisors were classroom teachers, some were administrators, and a few were retired personnel. 2. Clinical Supervisors duties and authority varied from region to region. 3. Cadre members were chosen, they were assigned, or they had to apply in some of the regions. The new partnership arrangements were going to significantly change the teacher training program.

Revitalization of teacher training starts:

Most of 1989 was spent in regional center organization. Clinical Supervisors were learning their roles and about the UNI Teacher Education program. Cadre members discussed seminars, student teacher placements and other issues they wanted to impact. Informing other regional center employees through mailings and newsletters was a large undertaking. Initial efforts of the partnerships focused on the regional center's concerns, not how they could affect campus programs.

Communications between regional centers, the personnel, and campus were paramount. In 1990 the UNI computer network, "Cobra," was extended to each region. E-mail, Gopher, and on campus discussion forums were available to all regional center participants. UNI provided, through an IBM grant, the PCs, modems, and an 800 toll-free number. After some brief training and self study by the OSFE professors, much dialogue occurred. Access to every campus office and all campus faculties from the regions was direct. Field based professors exchanged ideas with peers and campus people, Clinical Supervisors and Cadre members expressed thoughts between themselves and method's faculty, and a few bold folks engaged in classroom projects where children became keypals with other classrooms and with college students on campus. The computer network was a wonderful experience for everyone. It added depth of understanding to the realities of classroom teaching for teacher trainees and to professors on campus. Unfortunately, it was outrageously expensive for the

OSFE budget, $1600/month.

Decision making processes changed. Historically, the local professor decided all issues. For example: What seminars for student teachers would be conducted, how/where student teachers were placed in regional classrooms, if local concerns were important enough to warrant discussion, and what projects would be emphasized in the region. Now the Clinical Supervisors and the Cadre members wanted input into all of these issues. They expected democratic procedures to prevail and they expected campus based personnel would also help and support needs they decided were important. Regional professors willingly delegated responsibilities. Having dedicated professionals, who wanted to improve the student teaching program and who were willing to devote much energy to program betterment, was well received by OSFE faculty. These professors became entrenched in local issues and less connected to their UNI employer. Hence, problems developed, allegiance was questioned, and some choices made by regional based professors were not popularly locally or on campus. For example: 1. Professors who wanted to be promoted had to follow UNI rules for teaching, research, and service. Local activities did not always fall into these three categories, so the professor had to choose which projects were most important or should be accomplished. 2. The campus faculty rejected regional input and often refused to change methods or cooperate with the networks. In fairness, it should be pointed out that incoming ideas from two or more regional centers were often

converse suggestions. For example: Emphasize "whole language" vs. teach how traditional ability reading groups should be stressed. Situational leadership as written about by Hersey and Blanchard (1983) became common place in the regional centers.

Cadre members felt the partnerships should allow veteran teachers to pursue their own professional goals. They wanted to supervise teacher trainees in all of the field experiences (we have four field experiences in the undergraduate program). They wanted to experiment and collaborate with professors on effective teaching practices in their own classrooms. They wanted to expose teacher trainees to site-based management theory and other teacher empowerment practices. They wanted to conduct seminars in the regional centers and to be consultants for the method's faculty on campus. They wanted to serve on campus committees and graduate thesis committees. They wanted to meet face-to-face with professors and other cadre members from every regional center at a Cadre Conference (we have held four of these conferences). They wanted to impact all aspects of teacher training at UNI. Each regional center had ideas. More ideas than UNI had budget or personnel to facilitate.

What we have learned:

Collaboration is expensive! Public school personnel will charge you for their services and central administrators cannot take monies from their budgets to support outside agencies. When you work with professionals expect to pay for professional

services. Unless your institution has deep pockets you will have to find ways to be creative to meet expenses and you will have to make hard choices as to which projects are doable. For example: 1. You can hire adjunct retired teachers/administrators for much less than you can buy 50% of current employee's contracts. 2. If you establish a larger Cadre and give them a budget you will have more professional workers who will share resources. 3. If you pay school districts, not cooperating teachers directly, they will use student teacher monies for projects and not compensation. 4. Conferences and awards recognize great work by district personnel and often encourage districts to share costs.

Joint projects between regional schools and the university are exciting and beneficial to both parties. When professional educators from two different environments put their heads together to formulate ideas, better end-products are the result. For example: 1. Student teacher action research projects are required. The intent of these is for student teachers to contribute something to their cooperating teacher's classroom. Technology infusion projects, designed by student teachers and UNI faculty to meet classroom teachers' needs, have been especially rewarding. 2. Bringing campus experts to individual schools for in-service programs and advising has increased and created change. Issues like site-based management have accelerated and there has been expansion of Iowa Communication Network classrooms.

Shared publications and regional/national presentations have

fostered growth opportunities for teachers and professors. Being able to do research in classrooms and having teachers help design objectives has resulted in change.

Conclusions:

Formally connecting the campus to field practitioners has very positively affected teacher education at UNI. Today, regional centers are arms of the university teacher training program. Tradition barriers between professors and teachers have disappeared. Having a niche in the enterprise allows all parties to feel valued (Canning and Swift, 1992).

Student teachers have benefited the most from the formation of partnerships. Mentoring opportunties have expanded because the students had more communications with practicing professionals. The Cadre members, Clinical Supervisors, Resident Professors, and other campus faculty have promoted the student teacher's welfare by giving him/her ideas of ways to be successful in the classroom and school.

Summary:

Partnerships must be jointly developed by schools and universities if teachers of tomorrow are going to be trained for meeting the needs of children. Universities have more to gain at first so they need to initiate collaboration. Teacher trainees who experience a partnership training program will make better employees so it is in the best interests of schools to join

partnership efforts.

References:

Canning C., & Swift, K. (1992). Connecting the University and the Field of Practice: Computer Conferencing In Education at the University of Michigan. In M. Waggoner (Eds.) "Empowering Networks Computer Conferencing in Education," (pp. 1-33). New Jersey: Education Technology Publications.

Edgerton, R. (1993). Upside-Down Thinking. "American Association of Higher Education Bulletin," September, 3-7.

Goodlad, J. (1987). Schools and Universities Can and Must Work Together. "The Principal," September, 9-15.

Harris, J. (1994). A Model for Integration of Telecomputing in Preschool Curricula. "Technology in Teacher Education," 637-642.

Smith, D. & Auger, K. (1986). Conflict or Cooperation? Keys to Success in Partnerships in Teacher Education. "Action in Teacher Education," 1-9.

Stahlhut, R. & Hawkes, R. (1990). Networking Practitioners to Impact Teacher Education. (Eric Document Reproduction Service No. ED 319 500).

Weiss, S. (1996). Need Your Battery Charged. "Today's Education," February, 4-5.